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Race Relations
REPORTER

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Black Caucus names staff

The Black Congressional Caucus has opened the offices (415 Second St. N. E., Washington, D. C.), named a staff and is gearing up for a campaign designed to increase black participation in the national political process. The Caucus's recently appointed staff director, Howard T. Robinson, told RRIC that the staff's role would be to "flush out the facts and help to provide local elected officials with the information they need." Along with this supportive and consultative role, Robinson said, the staff would attempt to provide "profiles of the electorate" in the various states, with a view toward showing blacks "how to plug into the system where there are opportunities to do so."

Along with Robinson, 45, four other black staff members are now on board. Their salaries and the work of the Caucus are financed from the over $100,000 raised at a June 18 fund-raising soiree in the nation's capitol. Robinson brings an extensive background in international relations and labor relations to his new job, which began officially on Aug. 1. Immediately before becoming staff director, he was labor attache in the U. S. embassy in Tokyo. He has previously served as a staff member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, an international representative of the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, and a lecturer at the Weslyan Center for Advanced Studies. * * *

GI's protest military racism

A group of 236 black, white, Chicano and Indian GI's--all of them members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade that recently returned from Vietnam--have signed an open letter to Defense Secretary Melvin Laird accusing the armed forces of racial discrimination. The GI's tried to present the letter to Laird earlier this month when the Defense Secretary visited Fort Campbell on the Tennessee-Kentucky border to welcome their brigade home from Southeast Asia. But Gen. William Birdsong, the commander at Fort Campbell where the 173rd is now stationed, refused to allow the GI's to make the presentation. The GIs' letter asserted that "throughout our time in the service we've seen minority group GI's discriminated against. In Vietnam that's been evidenced by higher casualty rates. Other times it takes the form of slower

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promotions, higher penalties for rules violations and the worse job assignments. We feel that the Army fosters racism and has purposely avoided dealing with the day-to-day problems of minority groups."

In a press conference at the fort, Laird told newsmen he had not seen the petition, but acknowledged that the armed forces are beset with serious racial problems. "These are difficult problems," he said. "They are people problems." The secretary also contended, however, that progress has been made toward their solution. "We have made more progress in this area than any administration in American history," he asserted, and he said his source for that opinion is civil rights leader Roy Wilkins of the NAACP.

Another black leader who is less impressed with the administration's record, however, is Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, a Democrat from Berkeley, Calif. (See Race Relations Reporter, Vol. II, No 5). In an eight-page telegram to the protesting GI's of the 173rd, Dellums told them he supported their efforts to end racism in the armed services, to secure full constitutional rights for GI's and to bring about a complete withdrawal of U. S. forces from Vietnam. Pvt. Mike McIntire of Los Angeles read Dellums' telegram to the cheers of about 50 GI's who were demonstrating peacefully outside Fort Campbell following Laird's departure on Sept. 2. The group was predominantly white, but it also contained a healthy sprinkling of blacks, Spanish-Americans and Indians. McIntire, who is an Indian, explained to RRIC that while non-white GIs may have a more difficult time of it, most of the problems that concern him are common to soldiers of all races. "They are sending us to Vietnam to get ourselves killed for absolutely nothing," he said. "It's a complete farce. And if we do make it back and try to say anything about it, we get hassled by the lifers and investigated by the police." As McIntire was talking, FBI agents with cameras circled the demonstration, carloads of Tennessee State Troopers patrolled nearby, and two long-haired men, whom the protestors said were secret agents, listened intently. * * *

Lumbees continue school protest

Trouble has flared anew in Robeson County, N. C., where a Department of Health, Education and Welfare school desegregation plan has been put into effect. The plan has been bitterly resisted by many of the 28,000 Lumbee Indians who live in the county, and when school opened this year the protest teetered on the edge of violence. The chief trouble spot was Prospect High School in the heart of Robeson's Indian country, where 35 Lumbee students had sat in on classes all last year in direct violation of the HEW order.

This year, Danford Dial, the Lumbee principal of the school, confirmed that the 35 students would receive no official credit or grade advancement. Following Dial's announcement, a group of 30 to 50 adult Lumbees disrupted the opening of the school, and six were arrested on charges ranging from disorderly conduct to carrying dangerous weapons. In addition, Dial told the Winston-Salem Journal that he received numerous "dire" threats on his life, and he resigned. Two black teachers at the school said they were also threatened by Indians, and they have refused to report back for work. The U. S. District Court has given no indication when it will hear a Lumbee suit seeking to block implementation of the HEW plan. The suit was filed slightly more than a year ago, and it took HEW nearly a year to reply. Tension has continued to mount during the delay, and many blacks, whites and Lumbees fear there may be violence at some point during the fall. * * *

Kluxer's Nightmare Runs for Governor

By Jack E. White, Jr.

In Fayette, Miss., they call Charles Evers "The Mayor."

Evers looks like a Ku Kluxer's worst nightmare come to life: an archetypal "bad nigger," big and beefy, with wary eyes and hustler's hands. He talks like the Kluxer's nightmare, too. "Anybody who messes with me," The Mayor says, with the self-assurance of a man capable of carrying out the promise, "will get his ass beat off."

The 49-year-old Evers has taken to heart the old Mississippi warning—"Nigger, read this sign and run"—but he has given it a new twist. Instead of running away, he runs for public office. He became the first black mayor of a biracial Mississippi town in 1969. And now he is running for governor.

He doesn't stand a chance of winning the November gubernatorial election, but to him that's not important. The big thing, he says, is running at all. "Win, lose or draw with me, I win anyway," he said during a recent interview at the Evers Motel, Restaurant and Lounge in Fayette. "People say, 'Well, why you runnin' for guv'nor?' For the same reason I want to sit in front of that bus. Same reason why I want to sit at that lunch counter. Same reason why I want to sleep in a decent motel. Because I have a *right* to do that. If we had never tried those other things we would have never been able to do them today."

There are other reasons why Evers is running. They are the 220 black candidates for county and state legislative offices who are running with him this November. With Evers, probably the state's best-known and most respected black leader at the head of the ticket, the black voter turn-out will surely be higher, enhancing the local candidates' chances of winning.

"Evers can't win. There's no way that Charles Evers can become governor of this state," said George P. Taylor, a white, civil-rights attorney. "But Evers is running, for a number of reasons, for the very practical reason of pulling the black voters to the polls in the hopes of electing black candidates to county offices."

By heading the ticket while large numbers of blacks run for local offices, Evers is following the pattern set by Huntsville dentist John Cashin in last year's election in Alabama. Cashin's National Democratic Party of Alabama succeeded in electing about 15 of 162 black office seekers, bringing the state total to 106, as Cashin, the gubernatorial candidate, picked up about 15 per cent of the total vote. In Mississippi, the potential is somewhat greater as blacks comprise a larger percentage of the electorate.

Should a significant number of Mississippi blacks win elective offices, it will signal the beginning of a second Reconstruction in a state where blacks are grossly underrepresented in the halls of government. Although they make up more than 37 per cent of Mississippi's population, blacks hold far less than one per cent of the elective offices.

According to an authoritative roster of black elected officials prepared by the Washington-based Joint Center for Political Studies, only one member of the Mississippi House of Representatives is black. Among the other 94 black office-holders, there are no sheriffs or court clerks, and only a handful of county supervisors, school board members, aldermen, justices of the peace and constables.

Predictions on the number of blacks who will be elected this November vary. But most observers

agree that, at most, only one or two new black representatives will be added to Mississippi legislature and that in only five counties or less will blacks elect majorities to boards of supervisors. Evers feels that the five counties will be Jefferson (in which Fayette is located), Claiborne, Madison, Wilkerson and possibly Holmes.

The potential for blacks to take over counties would have been greater, he argues, had there been tough enforcement of the federal Voting Rights Act, which would have prohibited the re-registration of voters in 29 Mississippi counties (*Race Relations Reporter,* Vol. 2, No. 16: Sept. 7)

Other observers are less optimistic. The Rev. Harry Bowie of the Delta Ministry, for instance, predicts that only two counties will come under black control. He says that it takes at least a 57 per cent black voting majority and a very well-organized effort to elect black officials in any Mississippi jurisdiction. Only two counties, he says, meet those criteria at present—Claiborne and Jefferson, although others may be added before November.

Several major obstacles face Evers and other black leaders who hope this year's election will see the beginning of black political empowerment in Mississippi. Because of the obstacles, they have pursued a strategy that might seem curious and misguided to those not acquainted with the bizarre patterns of Mississippi politics and race relations.

The strategy has included asking black voters to support an unreconstructed white supremacist (Jimmy Swann) in the August Democratic primary. It has included branding the two men who came out on top in that primary—Lt. Gov. Charles L. Sullivan and attorney William Waller, the eventual winner of the Democratic nomination—as "the same old soup warmed over," despite the opinion of many longtime political observers that the two represented a new breed of racial moderation. And it has included a decision by Evers and most of the other black candidates to run as independents in November, despite the fact that Evers is Mississippi's Democratic national committeeman.

But curious as it might seem to the uninitiated, the strategy is based on a great deal of thought and experience, on the part of Evers and other leaders like Aaron Henry, a black Clarksdale pharmacist who is chairman of the Loyalist Democratic Party and candidate for the Mississippi legislature.

The decision to run as independents was made to ensure that the maximum number of blacks will be on the ballot in November. The harsh reality of Mississippi is that blacks are still extremely unsophisticated about the political process. It requires a great deal of energy to get them registered to vote. It takes an equal amount of energy to turn them out on election day.

"And they frequently do not understand that a party candidate must first win the primary and then a general election before he takes office. In the 1967 primary election, for instance, Alfred "Skip" Robinson, a black building contractor, finished first in the race for the Democratic nomination for Marshall County sheriff. He did not, however, receive more than half the votes cast, and thus faced a run-off. Blacks, believing that Robinson had the nomination wrapped up, didn't turn out for the run-off, and Robinson was defeated by a white.

Rather than risk losing black candidates in the primaries again this year, Evers and most of the other black office-seekers decided in late May to run as independents in November, although under the banner of the Loyalist Democratic Party. It was a wise move. Only nine of the 47 black campaigners who disregarded the advice of their fellows survived the primaries this year.

The decision to back segregationist Jimmy Swann in the gubernatorial primary was based on two major theses. First, Evers believed that voting for Swann would give black voters an opportunity to unify their new political power. And second, the black leader thought, Swann would be unpalatable to white Mississippians, who would then decide to not vote at all, rather than choose between himself and Swann.

"We had a chance to show our strength by defeating the middle-of-the-road guys by voting for the worst racist of all of them," he explained. "It would have given us a tool, something to fight against, because Jimmy Swann was such a racist he wouldn't even stoop to say anything nice to black folks."

Asked if he thought he could have defeated Swann in the general election, Evers smiled and said, "Yes sir. I still believe that if [they] had to make the decision between Jimmy Swann and Charles Evers, many whites wouldn't vote for me, but they wouldn't vote at all. Then, with all the blacks voting and all the so-called open-minded whites voting, that would have been enough to beat him."

Evers believes the strategy worked, although not as well as he would have liked. Swann finished a strong third in the primary with about 122,000 votes. Evers believes that 60,000 to 70,000 of those votes were cast by blacks, citing as evidence Swann's victories in several majority-black counties.

Confronted with a choice between Sullivan and Waller in the primary run-off, Evers advised black voters to sit it out. "There's no difference between them," he said. "They're both just the same soup warmed over again. They're controlled by the same group of people who've controlled all the other do-nothing governors."

Evers and other black activists maintain that the image of moderation that both Waller and Sullivan projected during the campaign was only a gambit, designed to lull black voters and truly moderate whites into believing that things were changing for the better. Neither engaged in race-baiting, as have previous gubernatorial aspirants. "It's a plot," said John Donald, a black law student serving as adviser to black candidates in Marshall County. "They want you to think these guys are different and better. They want black people to think that they'll be doing something for themselves by voting for one of these guys."

In the same vein, Evers points out that Sullivan was the founder of the first private segregation academy in Clarksdale—and that he remains its president. Waller, he says, has "no record at all, except that he's another great supporter of the private schools."

Evers neglected to mention one of the ironies of the campaign: Waller is the man who twice unsuccessfully prosecuted the accused murderer of his brother, Medgar. Now these two men, who in some sense can be said to have been on the same side at one time—against Medgar Evers's accused killer, Byron de la Beckwith—are squaring off against each other. Since there are over 770,000 white voters in Mississippi, and only between 275,000 and 300,000 black voters, there is no doubt that Waller will emerge in November as governor. But there is also no doubt, at least at the time of this writing, that Evers's campaign is far more significant for the state's political history.

What kind of man is Evers, what kind of governor would he be, if by some unpredictable turn of events he should be elected? This is how he answers those questions:

"I'm the only guy who's not hogtied by nobody. The only governor who'll do something for the state is me. . . . If I can just stay alive long enough to prove that a black man can be honest and fair, but firm and just, it's gonna make it a lot better for all of us. . . . I just want to be remembered as a man who cared enough to do something for his folks."

Evers said he would attempt to duplicate on a statewide basis what has been accomplished in Fayette during his two years as mayor. His successes include the introduction of three new industrial plants, a federally funded job training program, a federally funded health program and a complete overhaul of a city police force that was at one time known throughout the state for the racism of its officers.

Equally important to the accomplishments is the style of leadership Evers has had as mayor, and which, in the unlikely event he should be elected, he would bring to the governor's mansion. Evers is unabashedly paternal about his town (his detractors would make that "paternalistic"): "I'm the father of Fayette and the biggest servant it has. And my job is to provide for my folks."

He feels about Fayette and its citizens in much the same way he felt about the prostitutes and numbers players from whom he made his living before succeeding his late brother as NAACP field secretary in Mississippi in 1964. The common thread is a symbiotic relationship in which both partners benefit. In the present case, that of the mayor to the citizens, Evers sees the economic and political uplift of Fayette's blacks as a means of enhancing his own business ventures—which, besides the motel and restaurant, include the "Medgar Evers Shopping Center," a half-empty conglomeration of whiskey store, grocery, laundry and apartments. The shopping center's lack of success is testimony to Evers's fallibility as an entrepreneur.

Evers makes no bones about his desire to succeed in business—"money makes you independent," he said. "The money I get helps me keep my folks free. It makes them sassy, able to walk proud, stand tall, look good, smell good." He points out the young people who have remained in Fayette because they have been able to find jobs, as policemen, as counter workers in his restaurant, as clerks in city hall. "See these young folks here," he said, "suppose I hadn't of been the mayor. They wouldn't have had a chance."

The young people agree. An 18-year-old girl who will be a freshman at Alcorn A&M College this fall said Evers was "the kind of man all the kids bring their troubles to. If it's something you can talk about at all, you can talk to him about it. And he listens and tells you what he thinks. He doesn't preach."

Along with his roles as town father, businessman, state politician, civil rights leader and confidant of youth, Evers is also Fayette's city judge. In his role, he has established a reputation for extreme firmness in the administration of justice, particularly for traffic offenders who ignore the city's 25-mile-an-hour speed limit. He also is known for his strictness on the city's ordinance against profane language.

In one case, he fined a white man $1,000 for calling a black police officer a "nigger son of a bitch." "See, I can fine up to $300 on each count," he explained. "So if you call me a 'Black . . . sonnuva . . . bitch,' " he said counting off the words on his fingers, "that's three different ones."

But on the whole, Evers said, the relationship between blacks and whites in Fayette has improved during his tenure. Three white families have moved out, he said, but six other white families have moved in—a noticeable gain in a city whose population is less than 2,000. Whites have, on occasion, "tried me," said Evers, "but we proved to them we meant law and order."

It is the success of his mayoralty that Evers believes makes him a viable candidate for governor. But despite his optimistic statements about his chances in November, he is very much aware of how long blacks have to go before they can be said to be "free," in any real sense of the word.

Not only must they contend with the entrenched racism of Mississippi, he says with a tongue-clicking combination of resignation and disgust, but also with a deeply imbedded sense of inferiority that still prevails among many blacks.

"Let me be real frank with you. It's more than just saying 'I will' to run for public office. Believe me when I tell you, for a black man to run in the South and think he's gonna really make a showing, he's got to be almost super. Not that I'm any greater than any of the rest of us, but you know what I mean.

"There's no greater price that can be paid: black folks ain't gonna trust you, black folks ain't gonna help you, white folks ain't gonna help you. You see, all our lives we've been told by white folks that black folks ain't supposed to be nuthing . . . but servants. Even our own mothers and daddies told us the same thing.

"And when you start talking about you want to be mayor, you want to be representative, you want to be governor, you got a hell of a hill to climb. It's got to be understood: you got to overcome blacks."

A classic example of what Evers is talking about occurred last year in Port Gibson, a Mississippi town not far from Fayette. A young black man, Jimmy Smith, ran for mayor against incumbent Bill Gordon. Although there were 650 black voters to 485 white voters in Port Gibson, Smith lost the election by 577 to 525.

Despite all the problems, Evers keeps plugging, consciously determined to see everything in a positive light ("They killed Jo Etha Collier, but can you believe they're still in jail"), resisting the temptation to be much discouraged.

"We gotta keep fighting," he says. "We gotta keep pushing. We gotta chop them down one by one. Every time we knock one of those racists down that's a victory for us. And we gotta run every election. We gotta make sure that black folks don't cower down and shut up just because the odds are great against us."

"My job," he continued, "is to pave the way for those who may be able to benefit later on. . . . If we can ever get blacks and whites to realize putting them votes together, we can change anything we want to change. . . . You know why we can sit around here and converse today is because we got 98 per cent of the black folks in this city registered, and we vote, baby. And we gonna take every damn thing we can [in this county] because there's 81 counties where we may not get nothing at all."

NATRA Members Seek New Image

By Bernard E. Garnett

When Del Shields was executive secretary of the National Association of Television and Radio Announcers, he once recalled when NATRA was mainly "a social club of process-wearing niggers, who met once a year at a luxury hotel, for annual social and record-promotion activities."

There are many who feel that except for a change in hair styles—in keeping with current "Black Consciousness" fashions—Shields' assessment still is appropriate.

Obviously disturbed that after 16 years, their professional association still is not regarded very highly either inside or outside of the broadcasting and recording industries, a number of NATRA members now are calling for more professionalism, and less fun-and-games. Their concern may be an indication that NATRA finally is coming to grips with both its image and its role in a medium that reaches some 19 million black people every day.

NATRA's future course will depend largely on its president for the next two years, WABQ (Cleveland) operations manager Curtis Shaw. A young radio executive whose platform implied a dedication to building a dynamic and influential organization, Shaw does not think NATRA is realizing its full potential.

"We're going to strive to make NATRA to the industry what blacks have been to music," he told RRR. "NATRA is an intricate and necessary part. Whether or not the membership or people in general know it, the world will allow NATRA to continue to sleep forever, because when the black communicator wakes up, he's in position to wake up a sleeping black nation. And I think this is something that we have to realize. The purpose of NATRA is to upgrade and benefit its membership. At the same time, we also have a responsibility as the communicators, to make aware and to inform our constituencies, our listenerships, the people back in our own home cities—who rely upon us to have a modicum of knowledge to pass on to them."

During the campaign earlier this year (which culminated with elections during last month's convention), Shaw noted that two Federal Communications Commission vacancies will occur over the next two years. He said he wanted NATRA to be in position to influence President Nixon's choices to fill both spots.

Nonetheless, Shaw is among the many NATRA veterans who insist that much of the criticism directed at them is unjustified. Members take exception to accusations of being "bought off" by music firms; some say such accusations led to several fist fights during the 1968 convention, in Miami.

Many of the members concede, however, that NATRA has failed to inspire blacks in broadcasting. But they also call this year's presidential race an indication that NATRA is changing its course.

Shaw's opponent was WWIN (Baltimore) program director Al Jefferson. Jefferson promised "alert leadership" that he hoped would make NATRA an influential and truly professional association. Few veterans could remember a previous presidential contest in which they felt that no matter who won, NATRA stood to benefit tremendously. But the election was only one indication that this year's annual conference might signal the beginning of a new era for NATRA.

Held at Chicago's gleaming new Regency Hyatt House, the 1971 NATRA convention—called the biggest ever by some officers—appeared outwardly to be just another four-day binge of music, fun and games. Some 750 regular and associate members and their guests registered, but the most heavily attended activities were the dinner-shows, the private parties, and the various record firms' hospitality functions. Meanwhile, attendance at workshop sessions and business meetings ranged from about a dozen at one, to maybe 150 at another.

However, a number of veteran and new members were determined that this would not be a total waste of four days. One of the most outward indications of their mood was the underlying theme," *"Which Way NATRA,"* which was the title of former president Alvin Dixon's outgoing message.

Calling for dedication to business on the part of all members, executive secretary Lucky Cordell repeatedly referred to this year's convention as perhaps "the most important in our entire history." Seemingly responding to Cordell's call, a number of NATRA members engaged in critical self-examination, blasted their organization's past performance, and called for new direction. This took place in informal gatherings, meetings and even some of the association's literature.

The National Association of Televison and Radio Announcers has been called "a social club" and its annual conventions during the past 16 years have been mostly "fun and games." RRIC's Bernard Garnett attended NATRA's recent convention and found that much of the membership and its new leadership want to make the organization more professional.

The "Gold Coats"—members of the sponsoring Chicago chapter, identifiable by their gold blazers—even called a 2-a.m. curfew on record firms' hospitality parties (some have been known to last until 6 and 7 in the morning) and patrolled hallways like dormitory sentries.

But not all of those in attendance were impressed. One disc jockey from the South, for instance, commented, "It's the same old disorganization, partying, sex, and hell-raising that it's always been. I doubt we'll ever be invited back to this hotel, just like they seldom invite us back to other hotels."

The wife of one East Coast disc jockey commented, "From the first one we went to at the Waldorf-Astoria [1966], every year has seemed like a crucial year to NATRA. People get together and say, 'We'd better get together and take care of business, now.' And there's always the next one [convention], and nothing is ever accomplished—ever." She said that because of over-indulgence in night-time socials, conventioners seldom are rested enough to attend the next day's business activities. She suggested, "It should just be declared a social event—no pretext, no anything—and just leave it at that."

NATRA's first executive board meeting since the convention is scheduled for the end of September. Shaw thinks the future course of the organization may very well be determined then. "Out of this meeting," he predicted recently, "we'll get a picture of how aggressive NATRA will be in dealing with our problems. I know we'll be aggressive; the question is, how much." He is optimistic because officers include such knowledgeable professionals as Miss Ernestine Mathis (Columbus, Ga.), Douglas Eason (St. Louis), William Summers (Louisville, Ky.) and Charles Scruggs (San Francisco).

One of Shaw's first objectives is improved communications between NATRA leaders and the general membership. RRR heard a number of complaints that members were not kept abreast of important developments or given much voice in policy making. The new president also wants to trim the executive board to a "more workable" size than the present authorized strength of 15 to 30, and to build a solvent treasury.

To the outsider, these may hardly resemble sweeping or hard-hitting ideas. But NATRA insiders recognize these and similar moves as vital first steps to building an organization that can pack the wallop that other professional associations boast in their fields.

Shaw also is concerned about regional and local organization. Many believe that despite the conventions and functions of the national business office in Chicago, the total organization is nowhere without its branches. But judging from complaints of several members, only a handful of local and regional operations are truly viable branches.

Initially called the National Association of Radio Announcers, the name was altered in the mid-1960's to include television personnel, but the overwhelming majority continue to be in "soul" radio. The original organization unabashedly met principally for an annual frolic. Of course, there was some professional exchange of ideas. Many stalwarts still feel that with hundreds of blacks scattered throughout the country and otherwise not knowing one another, even the chance to meet others in their profession served a useful purpose and was an essential first step to organization.

But as the struggle for racial equality spread, NATRA's black consciousness grew. Thus, members began questioning their exclusion from top-paying positions, the long working hours, and the low pay that often necessitated working on extra jobs. They looked to their organization for some answers.

It may seem contradictory that at the same time many NATRA members became concerned about their position as black professionals, NATRA moved from motels to posh downtown hotels, instituted an Oscar-inspired "Golden Mike" award for "soul" music artists and radio personnel, and hired prestigious speakers for their functions.

But under the traditional method of financing—which many now agree was a mistake—this change was necessary. By virtually taking over a swank hotel and offering "headliner" attractions, NATRA could justify charging convention registrants fees that ranged in 1971 from $25 for guests to $100 for "participating members," plus $50 admission to the Golden Mike awards dinner. Most of the association's annual office expenses come from the national convention.

Despite widespread charges (even some within NATRA) that the organization has "sold out" to record firms, officials insist that the presence and contributions from the recording industry have been necessary to help meet expenses. But they emphasize that NATRA is not unduly obligated to these benefactors.

NATRA may, however, take a second look at its dependency on the recording industry, not necessarily through any discontent or feeling of undue influence by the industry. As one woman put it: "We just can't keep running to the record companies every time we get in trouble. It's time we started doing something for ourselves."

Whatever NATRA does about its financial situation, it may prove a much more simple task than solving what presently is the organization's most gnawing problem. More and more members are becoming disenchanted over NATRA's failure to act in member-management disputes. WLOK (Memphis) news director William Adkins even suggested that if NATRA cannot function in behalf of its members in the labor market, a new organization should be formed. Though this course is unlikely, since the majority would rather strengthen NATRA than form a separate group, it does show members' dissatisfaction with the association's ineffectiveness in the black broadcaster's sorry labor plight.

Legally, NATRA cannot function as a labor union. And at the moment, there appears to be no groundswell of sentiment to alter this status. There may be more attempts, however, to have the organization do what it can about wages, promotions, and job security, through friendly negotiations, for example. Meanwhile, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) remains the broadcasting industry's chief labor hope.